(a) whether it is a fact that the Reliance Industries Ltd. participated in an international bid floated by NTPC for supply of gas at $2.34 per MMBTU;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons behind fixing a higher price;

(c) whether gas developer companies are required to disclose their unit production costs to the Director General of Hydrocarbons and his Ministry;

(d) if so, whether RIL and other gas developers have declared the unit cost of production; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) NTPC had invited bids under International Competitive Bidding for procurement of natural gas @ 132 Trillion British Thermal Unit (TBtu) per annum for Kawas-II and Gandhar-II Expansion projects for a period of 17 years. M/s Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) was evaluated the lowest techno-commercially acceptable bidder and was issued a Letter of Intent (LOI) on 16.06.2004 resulting into a binding contract. However, RIL did not sign the Gas Sale Purchase Agreement (GSPA). Accordingly, NTPC filed a suit in the High Court of Bombay in Dec'05 against RIL for specific performance of the said contract. The matter is presently *sub-judice* in High Court of Bombay. As per the aforesaid contract, the gas commodity price is US$ 2.34 MMBTU (landfall price at Kakinada). The price of $2.34 is discovered through International Competitive Bidding.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. However, Contractors for Exploration & Production of oil & gas under Production Sharing Contract (PSC) regime are required to submit annual work programme, annual budget & audited annual accounts to Director General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) under various provisions laid down in the PSC.

Amendment of MPLADS guidelines

3522. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to amend the MPLADS guidelines; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) At present there is no proposal to amend the MPLADS Guidelines. However, as and when any issue is brought to the notice of the Ministry, clarification/circular is issued.

MPLAD scheme

3523. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) has been challenged in the Supreme Court;

(b) if so, when the petition was filed and admitted;

(c) whether hearings in the case are over and a judgement has been delivered; and

(d) the stand of the petitioners and Government's stand in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Writ Petition dated 4.1.1999 was filed in the Supreme Court and admitted for hearing on 1.6.1999.

(c) The hearings have been completed and the judgement is kept reserved by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

(d) The Petitioners mainly challenged the constitutional validity of the Scheme on the plea that:

(i) it was violative of Article 14 of the Constitution (Right to Equality) as it gave discretionary power to an MP to use this fund without any proper checks and balances, monitoring and accountability;

(ii) the money is withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund of India for implementation of the MPLAD scheme which is violative of the provisions of constitution;

(iii) expenditure incurred under the scheme is outside the purview of any law established by Parliament; and

(iv) the MPs have unlimited powers for allocating funds which amounts to corrupt practices.

The Government pleaded that neither the scheme is ultra virus of the constitution nor arbitrary, since implementation is done on the basis of a set of guidelines. There is also no conflict of legislative or executive powers and no office of profit is involved, as under the MPLAD Scheme, MPs only recommend the works based on the felt needs of the local community and the execution including expenditure is carried out by the Government machinery.

Cost and time over run in major projects

3524. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that majority of top 200 major projects under implementations have over run cost and time schedule;

(b) if so, the details of projects delayed by more than six months and cost escalated by more than 25 percent with reasons therefor;

(c) whether any responsibilities have been fixed for delays and cost over run; and